United Nations A/C.1/54/PV.26

General Assembly
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Official Records

First Committee

26th Meeting
Tuesday, 9 November 1999, 10 a.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Gonzalez . . . . . (Chile)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): As delegations were informed at the Committee's meeting yesterday morning, the Committee will proceed this morning to take decisions on the remaining draft resolutions in the Secretariat's informal paper No. 8. May I indicate that a slight, but not substantive, change has been made to this paper. Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 will be the last draft resolution to be considered by the Committee. The Committee will therefore take action on draft resolutions A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2, A/C.1/54/L.18*, A/C.1/54/L.30 and A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1 this morning.

In connection with the draft resolutions in cluster 1, does any delegation wish to make a general statement? I see none.

The Committee will therefore proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2. Do any delegations wish to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken on that draft resolution?

Ms. Fiffe (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2 is undoubtedly an innovative and timely initiative presented for the Committee's consideration this year. Cuba has carefully followed the evolution of this text and the consultations that have taken place on it. In our opinion, the revised text duly takes into account the views expressed by a number of delegations, including our own. We believe that the best way to make a well-balanced, comprehensive, non-discriminatory approach to the question of missiles is precisely to begin by requesting the opinions of member States on the subject, as the draft resolution before us does. This Committee is the right forum for a multilateral discussion of this timely issue. In this way we can contribute towards avoiding approaches promoted by certain States or groups of States that do not take into account the legitimate interests of the international community. For these reasons, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution, and we hope that it will be given broad support by the other delegations here.

Mr. Reimaa (Finland): It is my honour, on behalf of the European Union (EU), to speak on the draft resolution to which you have just referred, "Missiles", before it is put to a vote in the Committee. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association country members of the European Economic Area, Iceland and Norway, align themselves with this statement.

The European Union recognizes the importance of the topic of missile non-proliferation. While we support the basic thrust of the draft resolution, we find it vague in terms of the basic concern regarding the proliferation of missiles and missile technologies. Therefore, the EU has decided to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution. At the same time, the EU emphasizes the need to intensify international efforts to prevent the spread of missiles and missile technologies.

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Mr. Forquenot de la Fortelle (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like to add my delegation's brief comments to what was said by the Presidency of the European Union on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2, on which France has decided to abstain. In view of the rather laconic wording of the draft resolution, it is difficult for us to take a decision on this text. However, the draft gives rise to some questions. It is still ambiguous on the very important problem of missile proliferation, which presents a security challenge because of the development of missiles that might serve as means of delivery for weapons of mass destruction.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2 also gives rise to the question, in particular, of what is meant in the view of the sponsors by the quest for a comprehensive, balanced and non-discriminatory approach to the problem of missiles in the framework of arms regulation. It seems that the reply to this question should be envisaged from the standpoint of the threat inherent in missile proliferation, which means, I repeat, the proliferation of the means of delivery that might be used for weapons of mass destruction. If this really is the wish of the sponsors of this draft resolution, then we would certainly have a number of good suggestions for study.

In this context, the efforts that have been made by a number of countries in favour of missile non-proliferation should be duly taken into account. France, for its part, is fully prepared in due course to help conduct a genuine debate on missile proliferation and the best way to deal with it. Pending that, we will abstain in the voting on this draft resolution. France most earnestly hopes, as it stated during the debate and the vote on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.1/Rev.1, entitled "Preservation of and compliance with the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty", that the true dimension of the problem of missiles will finally be clearly acknowledged.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): There being no other delegation wishing to speak before a decision is taken on the draft resolution, I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2, entitled "Missiles", was introduced by the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran at the Committee's 25th meeting, on 8 November 1999.

The Committee will now vote on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Bhutan, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Thailand, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2 was adopted by 65 votes to none, with 58 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegations of Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Guinea, Jordan, Kuwait and Nigeria informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now call upon those representatives who wish to explain their vote or position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): The United States understands the sentiment behind draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2, "Missiles", but we believe it is premature to bring the issue of missiles into the United Nations system. Accordingly, the United States abstained. Overall, the wording is far too vague, especially in regard to the underlying intent and objectives. The single word "missiles" does not explain the key features of this issue that Member States would be requested to address. We assume the main point is to prevent the proliferation of missiles, even though the draft resolution does not say that. But the problems of missile proliferation are well known, and calling for a comprehensive approach to the issue of missiles in all its aspects will not help curb them.

The United States has been an active participant in seeking to curb missile proliferation. Our most effective efforts have been on a regional basis and have involved those States directly interested and affected. We believe any further efforts should, likewise, emphasize regional aspects. The United States plans to continue its efforts to curb missile proliferation and encourages other Member States to cooperate in the common cause. On the other hand, we seriously doubt that this vague initiative will enhance international peace and security.

Mr. Sungar (Turkey): Turkey's proximity to a region which has a high potential for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery has always forced us to be vigilant in following developments in this field. That is why we have actively supported all the initiatives aimed at preventing the proliferation of these types of weapons. From that point of view, we welcomed the introduction of this draft resolution in principle. However, besides the vagueness of its language we are concerned that the fourth preambular paragraph of the draft resolution that the Committee has just adopted could be misinterpreted as tacit approval of development and deployment of missiles. We believe that such misinterpretation could seriously hamper disarmament efforts at international and regional levels. That is why my delegation opted to abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2, entitled "Missiles".

Mr. Chang Man-soon (Republic of Korea): As my delegation stated during the general debate in the Committee, the proliferation of missiles, as a means of the delivery of weapons of mass destruction, seriously undermines international peace and stability. In particular, the recent test firings conducted in South Asia, the Middle East and North-East Asia show the urgent need for the United Nations to address the missile issue, particularly with regard to the proliferation of ballistic missiles.

In this regard, my delegation, while appreciating some positive elements of the draft resolution, is of the view that it fails to address these concerns properly. Therefore, my delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2.

Japan shares the concerns expressed by the international community on the proliferation of missiles as delivery vehicles for weapons of mass destruction, and for its part has been making efforts for the non-proliferation of these missiles. Therefore, my delegation appreciates the efforts being made by the Iranian delegation in trying to focus our attention on this issue in the Committee. The reservation we have concerning draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2 is that it has no explicit reference either to concern about the proliferation of missiles as delivery vehicles for weapons of mass destruction, or to recognition of the efforts being made, efforts in which my country participates. Therefore, my delegation abstained in the voting on this draft resolution.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of vote. The Committee has thus concluded its consideration of and action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.12/Rev.2.

We turn now to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*. I shall first call on those representatives wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken on the draft resolution.

Mr. Soutar (United Kingdom): May I begin by welcoming the willingness of the sponsors of this draft resolution to engage in dialogue with other delegations. I regret that we nevertheless feel obliged again to vote against the draft resolution on this subject this year. Perhaps I might briefly explain the reasons for that decision.

The United Kingdom has made clear its commitment to nuclear disarmament and to its obligations under article VI of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. This commitment has been given recent practical expression by the measures announced in 1998 in the United Kingdom's strategic defence review. These included significant reductions in, and unprecedented transparency about, the British nuclear deterrent. Our commitment to forward progress was further underlined by the United Kingdom's

ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty in 1998.

We share the frustration of the sponsors of the draft resolution at the slow pace of wider progress towards nuclear disarmament. We continue to urge faster progress in bilateral efforts to reduce the nuclear arsenals of the two major nuclear Powers. We are eager to see the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty brought into force at the earliest opportunity and have played a leading role in international efforts to that end. We are impatient to begin negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty, which is the internationally agreed next step towards nuclear disarmament.

We recognize that this draft resolution includes support for all these measures, which constitute the core of the principles and objectives agreed at the 1995 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference, but we question whether by going beyond that internationally agreed agenda and proposing a range of further measures, a number of which plainly do not command consensus support at the present time, this draft resolution is likely to make a practical contribution to forward progress towards nuclear disarmament. As in the resolution last year, this draft resolution contains many measures the United Kingdom strongly supports, but it also includes some we do not, including, for example, the demating of warheads from delivery vehicles, which we examined in detail in the course of the strategic defence review and concluded was, at the present time, incompatible with the maintenance of a credible minimum deterrent. We remain committed to supporting any measures that we judge would make a practical contribution to advancing the cause of nuclear disarmament.

Ms. Martinic (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Argentina shares the objectives of the international community in promoting disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. Unfortunately, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", contains elements with which Argentina does not concur. It is our hope that in the future draft resolutions on this subject will be drafted in terms that are acceptable to a larger number of members. For these reasons, the delegation of Argentina will abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*.

Mr. Al-Ahmed (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation would like to join the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*.

Mr. Forquenot de la Fortelle (France) (*spoke in French*): The First Committee is being called upon to take a decision for the second year in a row on a draft resolution entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda". Those in favour of this text stress its median approach, as well as the many improvements they have made to this year's draft resolution relative to last year's. If there is no doubt that some of these provisions meet the criterion of realism, for my delegation this draft, submitted by seven States, continues to give rise to a number of substantial problems that still make it just as unacceptable as the one presented at the fifty-third session. We find its general approach just as dangerous, and some of its proposals are just as open to criticism or are ambiguous. We believe the general approach is a dangerous one, and the question is, "why a new agenda?" France has always advocated, and will continue to advocate, the implementation of the programme of action defined by the decision of the 1995 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review and Extension Conference, and it cannot subscribe to the appeal for a new agenda that would call into question the 1995 agenda, which, I recall had three items: first, the implementation of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT); secondly, the conclusion and implementation of a fissile material cut-off treaty; and, thirdly, the commitment of nuclear-weapon States to progress systematically and gradually to reduce nuclear weapons as a whole and then to eliminate them, and the commitment of all States to work towards general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international monitoring.

Do the sponsors of this initiative believe that the programme of action has become outdated? If so, they should say so clearly. Why should one refer in operative paragraph 16 to the importance of full implementation, while at the same time calling for a new agenda for nuclear disarmament? To us, there seems to be an obvious contradiction, unless there is some hidden ulterior motive.

From the impressive number of proposals made in this document, I will refer here only to the following few. First, why consideration of nuclear policies and positions? The United Nations Charter acknowledges the right of every State, large or small, to legitimate self-defence, a universal right that is equal for all, without any corollary, and that any State can define in accordance with its legitimate needs for defence and security in the framework of existing treaties. It follows that defence policies and positions cannot be decided arbitrarily by anybody but the State concerned. How can the promoters of this initiative,

who rightly wish their sovereignty to be respected, tolerate the international community's defining for them their defence policies and positions? The answer is obviously that they cannot. I would add simply that the nuclear policy of France is based on the principle of the least possible sufficiency compatible with its security, and it is constantly adapting its doctrine and its means to the development of potential threats.

Why an international conference on disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons? Let us be clear. The five nuclear-weapon States have always opposed the idea of convening an international conference of this nature. We are not among those who think that the process of reducing nuclear arsenals would be more effective if it were to be dealt with within such a framework. What would be the benefit and usefulness of a conference in which the nuclear-weapon States would not take part? The 2000 NPT Review Conference would be the ideal occasion on which to deal with non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. We do not think that it would be right to subscribe to this proposal simply to follow the fashion. Should we subscribe to this proposal simply to satisfy the pride of some? We think not.

Why is there such ambiguity on the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference? How can one explain the delegations' suggestion that the 1995 consensus on the programme of action is somehow outmoded, that the four years that have elapsed since then have laid it to rest, when those same delegations are insisting that we do not tamper, because of its almost sacrosanct character, with a document from 1978 that does not seem to be showing a single wrinkle, despite the fundamental changes in the international arena. The ambiguity is great and is difficult to explain.

Finally, why is there such ambiguity with regard to the cut-off treaty? The delegations that, last September in Geneva, staunchly refused to include a simple reference to General Assembly resolution 53/77 I, on the cut-off treaty, which was adopted by consensus in 1998, resorting to false pretexts, linkages with other items on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament or practices that no one can see any written trace of — how can it be explained that those countries did not hesitate to appeal, in October in New York, for a special committee to be re-established in Geneva to pursue and conclude negotiations without delay, under operative paragraph 12 of the draft resolution. Here there is ambiguity, if not a contradiction, that is difficult to explain. The only way to dispel any doubts about the good faith of the promoters would be to have a simple phrase inserted at the beginning of operative paragraph 12, so that it would read,

> "*Calls upon* the Conference on Disarmament to re-establish without conditions, or any linkage with any other items, the Ad Hoc Committee".

The rest of the sentence could remain unchanged. If this is not to be the case, then we believe that the sponsors are using double-talk with the only goal of having the most credulous delegations succumb to the siren's call. The experience of drafting paragraph 24 of the report of the Conference on Disarmament to the Assembly was very instructive for us in many ways.

Some of the promoters of this draft resolution have for some years been the most ardent advocates of an approach to disarmament, in particular nuclear disarmament, that they call a policy of constructive ambiguity, and they are the most skilful experts in double-talk. The draft submitted to us this year has these two aspects to it, and we feel that nuclear disarmament is too serious a topic to be dealt with in an ambiguous and even contradictory manner. This should be done as clearly as possible, of course. Members will understand that in such circumstances my delegation, which has always preferred to talk straight rather than be politically correct, will vote against this text, as it has before.

Mr. Chomar (Mozambique): My delegation wishes to join the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*. My delegation thinks that it is very important that the new agenda should be in place for the countries concerned, including my own country. That is why we decided to join the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Ms. Fiffe (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): The draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.18* in some ways does not reflect Cuba's traditional positions on nuclear disarmament. Nonetheless, the fact that this draft emphasizes the need for a new agenda for a nuclear-weapon-free world gives it its own merits that we recognize and that we commend. My delegation believes that the final balance sheet of the draft resolution is positive and that its adoption would, as part of a broad group of other initiatives, contribute to the promotion of our priority objective in the field of disarmament, which is nuclear disarmament. For those reasons, my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution as a whole.

We appreciate the values of the text, and the fact that we are going to vote positively on it should not be taken to

mean that we approve of each and every idea in the text. Among the paragraphs that give my delegation cause for concern, and on which I recall that my delegation has requested a separate vote, are operative paragraphs 7 and 18.

Cuba is not a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, because we consider it to be fundamentally discriminatory and selective. We are against the fact that it legitimizes the nuclear Powers and creates two categories of States with different rights and obligations. We do not believe that this is the way to make progress towards the urgent objective of nuclear disarmament and the total elimination of nuclear weapons. It is for this reason that in the separate vote on operative paragraph 7 my delegation will abstain.

As for operative paragraph 18, we reiterate that the security guarantees for non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should be universal and unconditional. Cuba cannot accept such guarantees being provided only to States parties to a given treaty.

We recognize the good intentions of the main sponsors of the draft resolution and their priority interest, shared by Cuba, in achieving nuclear disarmament. For this reason our delegation will vote in favour of the text as a whole.

Mr. Al-Hariri (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I only wish to draw the attention of the Secretariat to an error in the Arabic text of the draft resolution.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We have now concluded explanations of vote before the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*.

Mr. Fruchtbaum (Solomon Islands): I wish to ask whether or not a co-sponsor of a draft resolution can take a point of personal privilege.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): The answer is no.

Mr. Fruchtbaum (Solomon Islands): Can we take a point of personal privilege after the voting?

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): That can be done only in the framework of general statements on all draft resolutions and before taking a decision on any of the draft resolutions. Unfortunately, as a sponsor you do not have that privilege.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation is a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18* and for that reason we have no right to make an explanation of vote, nor should I have to be speaking now to say that every delegation has the right to vote as it pleases, but there is no right to offend those who submit draft resolutions. Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18* — and I want to correct a speaker who preceded me — was not presented by seven delegations. The number of co-sponsors is more than 60 at present. In the draft resolution there are no ulterior motives or hidden agendas. I am very sorry to have had to have said what I had no right to say.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We will proceed to the vote, because I do not think there is any point in our getting involved in a dispute that does not relate to the substance of the issue. But I would ask that we focus on what we have in front of us right now and not try to find entitlements in the rules that the rules really do not give us. Let us try to maintain the atmosphere that has prevailed up to the second to last day of the Committee's work.

Before giving the floor to the representative of Solomon Islands I would say that if he wishes to make a statement it could be made as a statement of a general nature after the decision-making on the draft resolution. Would that be acceptable? That is agreed.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda", was introduced by the representative of New Zealand at the Committee's 16th meeting, on 26 October 1999. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18* are contained in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF/2. In addition, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Angola, Guyana, Jamaica, Mozambique and Saudi Arabia.

Separate votes have been requested on operative paragraphs 7 and 18.

The Committee will now proceed to vote on operative paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Algeria on a point of order.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I apologize, but I think that last year we agreed that every

time there was to be a separate vote the Secretariat should read out the paragraph in full so that all delegations would know exactly what they were voting on.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the Secretary of the Committee, who will certainly read out the paragraph in full.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Previous practice is that preambular paragraphs would be read out, but operative paragraphs are clearly indicated. But as there has been a request, I will read it out.

Operative paragraph 7 reads as follows:

"*Calls upon* those States that have not yet done so to adhere unconditionally and without delay to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and to take all the necessary measures which flow from adherence to this instrument as non-nuclear-weapon States".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

India, Israel, Pakistan

Abstaining:

Bhutan, Cuba, Latvia

Operative paragraph 7 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18 was retained by 128 votes to 3, with 3 abstentions.*

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the Secretary of the Committee to conduct the voting on operative paragraph 18.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now vote on operative paragraph 18 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*. Operative paragraph 18 reads as follows:

"*Calls for* the conclusion of an internationally legally binding instrument to effectively assure non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland,

Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Cuba, India, Israel, Pakistan, Republic of Korea

Operative paragraph 18 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18 was retained by 128 votes to none, with 5 abstentions.*

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now vote on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*, as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Austria, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Bulgaria, Estonia, France, Hungary, India, Israel, Monaco, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, China, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Mauritius, Myanmar, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, Uzbekistan

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18, as a whole, was adopted by 90 votes to 13, with 37 abstentions.*

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now call on those delegations wishing to explain their vote or position. In order to avoid any difficulties, I urge delegations to respect as closely as possible the rules of procedure; otherwise, we will get into disputes that do not help us at all and make our work more difficult.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has always stood for the complete prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons with a view to freeing humanity from the threat of nuclear warfare and bringing about, at an early date, a nuclear-weapon-free world. In this context, China fully understands the concern and request of the international community regarding the issue of nuclear disarmament.

The Chinese delegation supports the principles and goals of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*, namely, the complete prohibition and total elimination of nuclear weapons and the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free world. We also support some of the specific steps put forward in the draft resolution, including calling upon nuclear-weapon States to review their nuclear doctrines; to conclude an internationally legally binding instrument to effectively assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons; to strengthen the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons; and to establish nuclear-weapon-free zones. Preserving the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty

and keeping it from being weakened or even repudiated, and stopping the development of anti-missile systems, which undermines global strategic stability, are the necessary conditions for progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

In this connection, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18* rightly points out that the ABM Treaty remains the cornerstone of strategic stability. On the other hand, however, we have noted that other measures are also called for in the draft resolution, such as the de-alerting of nuclear weapons, the removal of nuclear warheads from delivery vehicles and demonstrating transparency on nuclear arsenals and fissile material inventories. China believes that these mentioned measures could be taken only in an international environment of peace, security, stability and trust, and should be linked with negotiations on nuclear disarmament. Under the current unsettling international circumstances, the time is not yet ripe and the necessary conditions are not present for taking such measures.

It should also be pointed out that the draft resolution fails to urge all nuclear-weapon States to commit themselves to the non-first-use of nuclear weapons and not using or threatening to use nuclear weapons against all non-nuclear-weapon countries. These elements, however, are crucial to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

For these reasons, the Chinese delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*.

Mr. Lint (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, the Republic of Moldova, Slovakia and Spain to explain our abstention in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*, entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the need for a new agenda".

We welcome and fully agree with the commitment expressed in the draft resolution to achieve nuclear disarmament with the ultimate objective of a nuclear-free world. We think that we can better achieve that objective by urgently pursuing the gradual process of nuclear disarmament. We observe with concern that this process might be seriously hindered by the lack of progress concerning the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and by differences on the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty.

We can agree with many of the elements contained in the draft resolution. We, too, are concerned by a number of negative developments in the area of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We, too, are convinced that new momentum is needed to revitalize the nuclear-disarmament process and non-proliferation, although we are not convinced that new machinery or new institutions would be necessary to achieve that end.

We recognize that the sponsors of the draft resolution have made serious efforts to take into account some of the objections related to the text adopted last year. We can, moreover, support many of the recommendations in the draft resolution. That being said, some elements still remain that do not, in our view, reflect the most appropriate manner in which to achieve the ultimate objectives that we have set ourselves and on which we are in agreement.

We continue to attach the greatest importance to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for nuclear disarmament. We firmly believe that any progress in the area of nuclear disarmament can be achieved only through the current process — that is, the process based on article VI of the NPT and the goals defined in the 1995 principles and objectives. Efforts in this context have already made considerable progress but have also had serious setbacks. We believe that we should redouble our efforts in order to overcome those setbacks and to make new progress on the basis of the agreed principles and objectives.

The objective of the universality of the NPT remains of the highest importance. Efforts to this end encountered the greatest setbacks in the history of the NPT, following nuclear testing last year in South Asia. Overcoming these setbacks should become an even more urgent priority. Bilateral negotiations between the United States and Russia have had important results in the nuclear-disarmament process but have not made as much progress in recent years as we had hoped. It is urgent to revitalize these efforts in order to ensure the entry into force of START II and the opening, without delay, of negotiations on START III.

We most earnestly regret the American Senate vote against the CTBT, and welcome with satisfaction the public commitment of President Clinton to continue to work for the ratification of the Treaty and to continue to observe a moratorium on nuclear testing. International efforts for the prompt entry into force of the CTBT should be continued with increased determination. Negotiations on a non-

discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices are long overdue. We ask the Conference on Disarmament to begin, without delay and without preconditions, negotiations on such a treaty.

Even if nuclear disarmament comes first and foremost within the purview of the nuclear States, it is also a legitimate concern of the international community. Consequently, we support the establishment by the Conference on Disarmament of an ad hoc working group to study ways and means to begin an exchange of information and views on efforts for nuclear disarmament, as proposed by Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Norway in February 1999.

In order to make progress in the area of nuclear disarmament, we need shared responsibility and the political will to continue and to achieve the existing objectives. Countries will not be judged by resolutions or declarations, but by their actions towards the achievement of these objectives. In this regard, the most immediate objectives would be the success of the NPT Review Conference next year and the opening of negotiations on a treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices at the beginning of the next session of the Conference on Disarmament. We will continue to pursue these objectives actively and constructively, and we are prepared to cooperate closely with the sponsors of this draft resolution, as well as with all States, both nuclear and non-nuclear, with a view to achieving our common objectives.

Ms. Kunadi (India): My delegation understands that the genesis of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18* began with the Joint Declaration issued in Dublin on behalf of eight countries in June 1998. India welcomed that Declaration. However, this draft resolution goes far beyond the parameters of the Joint Declaration.

The Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, the first special session devoted to disarmament (SSOD I), remains the only consensus document on disarmament adopted by the international community as a whole. The Final Document contained a programme of action which remains only partially implemented. Any agenda for the future would necessarily have to take into account as the starting premise, the implementation of the programme of action contained in the Final Document of SSOD I.

It is evident that on the most important element, nuclear disarmament, the international community has made little progress. The question we need to pose is whether there is a need for a new agenda when the most important element in the existing agenda remains yet to be accomplished. The draft resolution includes extraneous elements and formulations that were adopted in other forums. We reject restrictive approaches concerning security issues, such as those contained in operative paragraphs 6, 7 and 8, that are not only extraneous to this draft resolution but are also completely divorced from reality on the ground. India no longer has a nuclear-weapons option. That option has been exercised.

The draft resolution also tends to base its recommendations on fallacious concepts, such as, in paragraph 6,

> "those three States that are nuclear-weapons-capable and that have not yet acceded to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons".

This concept is analytically hollow and does not correspond to reality.

The reference to a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia not only borders on the absurd but also calls into question one of the fundamental guiding principles for the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones, namely, that the arrangements for such zones should be freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. This principle was again endorsed by the Disarmament Commission during its substantive session this year. As we have stated on other occasions as well, given current realities, the proposal for a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia has as much validity as would proposals for nuclear-weapon-free zones in East Asia, Western Europe or North America.

Given the omnibus nature of this draft resolution, there is a surprising lack of any mention of doctrines of first use of nuclear weapons. The only remaining transcontinental military alliance, whose security policy is predicated on nuclear weapons, reaffirmed its nuclear-doctrine policy of first use of nuclear weapons earlier this year. Similarly, the draft resolution ignores efforts in certain countries to refine and modernize nuclear weapons for retention well into the next millennium. The ongoing efforts to build ballistic missile defences could well have the effect of further eroding the international climate conducive to the promotion of disarmament and the strengthening of international peace and security. Instead of

emphasizing the gravity of these actions, which place in peril the entire fabric of multilateral disarmament efforts, some three paragraphs of the draft resolution have been redrafted to make them more palatable to the established nuclear-weapon States.

The draft resolution is also silent on the current impasse in the Conference on Disarmament due to the inflexibility shown by a few delegations on the questions of nuclear disarmament and outer space, ignoring the express wishes of the vast majority of its members, which support the commencement of substantive negotiations as part of a balanced and comprehensive programme of work.

My delegation's views on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) are well known. This draft resolution attempts to revive the sagging fortunes of a Treaty that has disappointed the vast majority of its States parties. We sympathize with those that have been striving unsuccessfully over the years, including at the third session of the NPT Review Conference Preparatory Committee this year, to get the self-anointed five nuclear-weapon States to accept unequivocal commitments for nuclear disarmament and the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The draft resolution is silent on the multifarious sources of proliferation which the NPT has failed to stem. We believe that all such efforts, however worthy and energetic in their own right, would be limited by the unequal and discriminatory framework of obligations enshrined in the NPT.

As we have maintained, a new agenda cannot succeed in the old framework of the NPT. The need therefore is to move beyond the old framework and move towards a system which ensures a durable system of international security based on the principle of equal and legitimate security for all.

We would have expected that this draft resolution would have included proposals contained in the Final Document of the Twelfth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in 1998 in South Africa, that country being one of the sponsors of the draft resolution. That Final Document included concrete proposals towards a nuclear-weapon-free world, particularly the call for an international conference with the objective of reaching agreement on a phased elimination of nuclear weapons. Similarly, we would have preferred the designation of the use of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, as a crime against humanity within the purview of the International Criminal Court.

Although my delegation also shares the objective of the total elimination of nuclear weapons and the need to work for a nuclear-weapon-free world, we remain unconvinced of the utility of an exercise bound by the flawed and discriminatory approaches of the NPT. We therefore cast a negative vote on the draft resolution as a whole.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): While respecting the motivations of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*, the United States voted "no" on it for a number of reasons. The most notable of these is that we cannot support the fundamental premise on which it is based, namely, that there is a need for a new agenda for nuclear disarmament.

As Under-Secretary-designate Holum said on 20 October during the general debate, we already have a broad, multilateral arms control agenda awaiting completion. However frustrating the current pace of progress towards nuclear disarmament may be, the facts nevertheless demonstrate that we have made dramatic progress in nuclear arms reductions since the height of the cold war. The record shows that disarmament is best achieved through practical, incremental steps, each building on its predecessors and each taking into account the realities of the international security environment. This is painstakingly difficult work, but it produces results. We do not think that draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18* will help reinvigorate the disarmament process. Let me offer two illustrative reasons why.

The draft resolution, in paragraph 1,

> "*Calls upon* the nuclear-weapon States to make an unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the speedy and total elimination of their nuclear arsenals and to engage without delay in an accelerated process of negotiations".

If the solemn undertakings already made in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, which the United States takes very seriously, are not sufficient, what good would it do to add yet another undertaking?

The draft resolution also calls for an international conference on nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation to complement efforts in other settings. International conferences have their place, but we already have more of them than we can put to good use. Another layer of international discussion will not speed progress towards nuclear disarmament. The United States believes

that the current disarmament agenda is full enough. Indeed, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18* embraces most of it.

We also believe that it is past time to begin in earnest negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a cut-off of the production of fissile material. The General Assembly has endorsed this project, and this, rather than a new agenda, is the sort of concrete, practical step we need to reinvigorate the process of nuclear disarmament.

As Mr. Holum said, we need to make renewed efforts to reinvigorate the current agenda we have, not to try to create a new one.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): My delegation shares the goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world and appreciates the enthusiasm of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18* to lay out an extended series of concrete measures to reach the goal. It is the view of my Government that in order to reach the goal there is no other way than proceeding step by step through realistic and concrete measures. In this regard, we need to have cooperation from the nuclear-weapon States, and it is not necessarily constructive to take a confrontational attitude vis-à-vis these States.

It is also the view of Japan that the pace of nuclear disarmament is far from satisfactory, but an attempt to short-cut the process out of frustration would not be productive.

We recognize improvements in this year's draft resolution. On the other hand, it still betrays a degree of scepticism towards the commitment of the nuclear-weapon States.

After careful and serious consideration Japan finally decided to abstain in the voting on this draft resolution. Nevertheless, I would like to re-emphasize that my country fully shares the goal and necessity of creating a world free of nuclear weapons. I would like to urge member States, particularly the nuclear-weapon States, to make their utmost efforts for a successful outcome of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons 2000 Review Conference. In order to ensure that, accelerated efforts for the ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, particularly by the three nuclear-weapon States which have not yet done so, as well as progress in the bilateral negotiations on nuclear disarmament between the United States and the Russian Federation, would surely help create a conducive atmosphere. We also call for intensified efforts to reach an agreement at that Conference on updated objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, based on the review of achievements since 1995.

Mr. Sungar (Turkey): As a State party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other international agreements in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Turkey has always shared the aspiration of the international community to a world free of nuclear weapons. My country continues to believe that systematic and progressive efforts by nuclear-weapon States are essential for the reduction of nuclear weapons globally, with the ultimate goal of eliminating those weapons within the framework of general and complete disarmament.

Since last year's resolution contained certain elements and contradictions which made it difficult for us to support, we opted to vote against it and explained our reasons for doing so. This year, however, we think that there are some improvements both in language and substance which made it possible for us to change our vote to an abstention.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): In spite of some imperfections and some wording that from the Algerian standpoint should be reviewed, my delegation joined in voting in favour of this draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*. Algeria supports all efforts aimed at non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. This draft resolution is part of those efforts and supplements those made elsewhere. Algeria, which agrees with the idea of a nuclear-weapon-free world, essentially supports the measures considered in this draft resolution and welcomes the improvements made this year to it and hopes that the sponsors will continue to improve upon it in order to enable those delegations that still have difficulties with it to support it.

Mr. Al-Hariri (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation is committed to nuclear disarmament, and on this basis we supported the draft resolution. But we would like to place on record our reservation on operative paragraph 9, which deals with the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, for the reasons earlier indicated by my delegation when the draft resolution on that Treaty was adopted.

Mr. Chang Man-soon (Republic of Korea): As we have expressed on many occasions, the Republic of Korea has consistently supported international efforts to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime and to achieve the ultimate goal of a nuclear-weapon-free world. In this regard, my delegation appreciates the sincere efforts of the

sponsors of this draft resolution aimed at setting a new agenda for a nuclear-weapon-free world. We understand the main thrust of this draft resolution and support some of its elements, such as operative paragraphs 7, 8, 9 and 12. These issues constitute key components in upholding the principles and objectives of the nuclear-non-proliferation regime.

Despite these positive elements, however, we believe that any nuclear disarmament measures should be based on reality. Steady improvements in the global security environment, along with a practical and incremental approach, can bring about concrete results on the road to the ultimate goal of eliminating nuclear weapons. At the same time, the strengthening of and the securing of compliance with the existing multilateral agreements related to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament are no less important than producing new agreements. The continuing non-compliance with obligations of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards agreements by a handful of countries poses a serious challenge to the international community. These concerns are not adequately reflected in this draft resolution. For these reasons, my delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*.

Mr. Luck (Australia): The Australian delegation finds that the proposed new agenda draft resolution warrants a great deal of reflective thought, as was no doubt intended by its authors. The new agenda coalition has worked assiduously to prepare a comprehensive draft resolution on nuclear disarmament designed to attract wide support. The result is a draft resolution whose particular virtue is to call attention to the important unfinished business involved in the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. The authors have sought to do this in a measured and even-handed way, directing their appeals to the five nuclear-weapon States as well as those countries outside the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). In the process, they have provoked a great deal of thought and discussion not only here but also in national forums.

Taken individually, there are few elements of the draft resolution that Australia would object to, although we do have significant reservations about what might be achieved by an international conference on nuclear disarmament. Aspects of the draft resolution are worthy of strong support. There is appropriate reference, for example, to mainstream non-proliferation and disarmament objectives and to the importance of adherence to the NPT and of the universality of the Treaty. Similarly, calls for States to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and commence negotiations on a fissile material cut-off treaty reiterate worthy existing priorities.

We have concerns, however, with the draft resolution taken as a whole and the message it sends. We find its broadly positive content to be overshadowed by a premise, especially in its preambular paragraphs, which casts doubt on the commitment of the nuclear-weapon States to the undertakings they have made in article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty to "pursue negotiations in good faith" on nuclear disarmament. By calling for a new agenda the draft resolution signals a belief that the existing non-proliferation regime is failing.

These are not contentions we accept or believe are helpful to make, and it is essentially for this reason that Australia finds itself once again unable to support such a draft resolution. Accordingly, we have registered an abstention.

We also question whether, despite its aspirations, the draft resolution offers compelling new insights into the course which nuclear disarmament must take. It rehearses a familiar and largely accepted agenda, but it risks offering false hope if it is taken to suggest that nuclear disarmament is likely to be anything other than a complex incremental process in which each step is evaluated for the security benefits it will bring.

Australia supports practical, realistic proposals on nuclear disarmament which are capable of winning the support of all States, including the nuclear-weapon States. Although proponents of the new agenda draft resolution are yet to achieve this, Australia shares their desire to see further negotiations among the nuclear-weapon States. We want to see reductions in nuclear warhead numbers which are stable and verifiable. We recognize that this can only be achieved when the nuclear-weapon States themselves have negotiated, and therefore have confidence in, the measures being taken. While the main onus for nuclear disarmament lies with the nuclear-weapon States for the time being, the non-nuclear-weapon States can make an important contribution by moving expeditiously with steps which reinforce non-proliferation and disarmament goals such as encouraging the entry into force of the CTBT and the negotiation of a fissile material cut-off treaty.

Mr. Tomaszewski (Poland): Like last year, when the draft resolution on the need for a new agenda for a nuclear-weapon-free world was submitted for the first time, Poland cast a negative vote on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*, but not because it disagrees with the content of the draft

resolution. On the contrary, let me assure the Committee that we agree with most of the stipulations contained in the draft resolution.

Poland was, and still is, committed to the ultimate objective of nuclear disarmament. Six months ago the Government of the Republic of Poland deposited its instrument of ratification of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty.

At the same time, we believe that the international community should be realistic in setting measures to attain that ultimate objective. Poland has always been of the view that the objective should be attained on a step-by-step basis. If we look from a 20-year perspective, we realize that much has been done towards a nuclear-weapon-free world since the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament, in 1978. True, recently we are witnessing some setbacks on the road, but it seems only natural that, living in a rapidly changing world, we have to face and deal effectively with such setbacks.

In our view the draft resolution is trying to artificially accelerate the process of attaining the ultimate goal — not on the main road, but on a side track, where the permanent members of the Security Council, those with special responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, are absent. We are convinced that without their participation the best new agenda will not be able to accelerate the process of attaining the ultimate goal. Therefore, it is only after we have secured the participation of all the permanent members of the Security Council in the new agenda that Poland will be convinced of the effectiveness of those efforts.

Mr. Neewoor (Mauritius): Mauritius abstained in the voting on the draft resolution on account of operative paragraph 9, which calls upon States that have not signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) to do so. Mauritius is not a signatory of the CTBT, the reason being that it fails to provide the framework for a timetable for the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Westdal (Canada): Canada abstained on the new agenda draft resolution last year and decided to maintain its abstention again this year, on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*. In both cases the decision was the product of careful, very intensive, high-level consideration. I speak now to share some of the thinking underlying that decision.

Our decision was not, for the most part, a response to the text of the draft resolution. This year's text has evolved considerably and favourably relative to the text that we examined last year. The Government of Canada also shares much of the new agenda coalition's assessment of the serious strains on the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime based on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The new agenda draft resolution remains a very timely and pointed reminder of the urgent need for further progress on both these fronts. In our view, however, concerted action to address the many challenges facing the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime will require the broadest possible base of support. The nuclear-weapon States and their partners and alliances need to be engaged if the goals of the new agenda draft resolution are to be achieved. For our part, we intend to continue to cooperate with all like-minded States in the relevant forums to build greater support for advancing the key aims of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime.

As a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Canada was pleased to note the increase in the number of NATO non-nuclear-weapon States sharing a common position in this year's voting. We look forward to NATO's consideration of non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament options mandated by the Washington Summit. We see this process as one of the avenues for addressing the critical issues raised by the new agenda draft resolution. As Minister Axworthy said in Boston on 22 October, the Canadian Government believes it is crucial for NATO to have an arms control and disarmament policy that reflects the next decade, not the last.

The issues addressed by the new agenda coalition draft resolution will be before us again in the April/May 2000 NPT Review Conference, when the accountability promised in the indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995 will be put to an important public test. As I indicated in our general statement to the Committee, the Canadian Government will be working to ensure that next spring's Review Conference reinforces the Treaty and restores momentum to the fulfilment of its goals.

My explanation of our vote ends there, but I believe that I am the last speaker in the consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.18*. I therefore take the liberty of addressing briefly the next subject on our agenda, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30, on the fissile material cut-off treaty, which this year Canada introduced.

The sponsors have agreed with the view I expressed in introducing the draft resolution that it should be adopted

without a vote. We have since been advised that there has been a request for a vote. Before action is taken on draft resolution A/C.1/54.L.30, therefore, I request a 30-minute suspension of the proceedings to allow the sponsors to meet and to decide how they want to proceed with the draft resolution.

Should you agree to this suspension, Mr. Chairman, a meeting of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30 would follow immediately in Conference Room A.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Before the Committee decides on the request made to the Committee by the representative of Canada, I call on the representative of Solomon Islands to make a general statement.

Mr. Fruchtbaum (Solomon Islands): The heat that I felt at what I took to be an insult by a previous speaker to my delegation and to the other sponsors of the new agenda draft resolution has cooled, and instead of making a statement I just will not speak to him again in the delegates' bar.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I hope that does not include the Chairman.

I think we are getting past the obstacles that have arisen.

I want to make a very serious appeal. I have tried from the very outset to be as careful as possible so that all delegations — I emphasize, all delegations — have an equal right to present draft resolutions. I do not think anyone has a right to ridicule draft resolutions. It is one thing to disagree on substance, and it is quite another to ridicule. That seems to me to run counter to our most basic principles, every delegation has an enshrined right including the sovereign and inviolable right of all delegations to put forward draft resolutions. Members are free to interpret this as they will, but I think it is clear to everyone what we are talking about.

The representative of Canada has made a request. The Chair has no objection. Quite the contrary: we believe this would contribute to expediting our work. But I would ask that we stick to what we might term a Swiss half hour, a real half hour, so that we can conclude our work this morning. It is now 11.45 a.m. The Committee will meet again at 12.15 p.m. sharp.

I call on the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): May my delegation suggest that we go now to cluster 6 and finish the draft resolutions therein, and then suspend the meeting for 30 minutes?

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): That is a very good suggestion. We will turn to cluster 6.

I call on the representative of Japan on a point of order.

Mr. Hayashi (Japan): In the same spirit as that stated by the representative of Egypt, my delegation would like action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 to be taken before the suspension of the meeting.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Mexico on a point of order.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Twenty-four hours have not yet elapsed since the distribution of the revised version of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9. I would suggest that draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 be the last draft resolution on which we take a decision today.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I am in the hands of the Committee members. Another approach might be to wait for the 24 hours to elapse — I think that is in about 15 minutes — and then we come back to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, and then we take the half hour. We would be strictly applying the rules of procedure. Can anyone tell me, or can the representative of Mexico tell me, when exactly the 24 hours would be up?

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation received draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 at 12.15 p.m. yesterday.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): There is a suggestion from Mexico that we could apply as follows. We suspend until 12.15 p.m. and then meet to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1. We suspend again for half an hour and then meet on the other draft resolution. The Committee is telling me that we cannot take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 because the 24-hour period has not yet expired.

Mr. De Icaza (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): As a notion of order, Canada has requested that we suspend for half an hour. Motions of order for suspension take precedence over anything else. Why not suspend for half an hour, as requested by the representative of Canada, and

then meet again at 12.20 p.m. and continue in the order that had been set?

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I will give you a very direct answer to that. It is because the representative of Egypt and the representative of Japan asked that the suspension not take place until we had first taken action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1. Would the representatives of Egypt and Japan agree that we could suspend the meeting and then come back and take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1?

Mr. Khairat (Egypt): My delegation would prefer to take action on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1 before the suspension of the meeting.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I call on the representative of Canada.

Mr. Westdal (Canada): I did not want to derail the Committee. I made my request that there be a suspension before we came to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30 simply because it was next on the list. Would a solution not be to deal now with draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1, then have our suspension, and then to come back to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, by which time 24 hours will have passed?

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Very well, that is what we will do.

Does any delegation wish to make a general statement on draft resolutions in cluster 6?

The Committee will now proceed to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1.

I call first on those representatives wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken.

Mr. Reimaa (Finland): It is my honour, on behalf of the European Union (EU) to speak on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1, entitled "Transparency in armaments", before it is put to the vote. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries, Cyprus and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association country members of the European Economic Area, Iceland and Norway, align themselves with this statement. The States subscribing to this explanation of vote will vote against the draft resolution.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1 is not acceptable on grounds of principle. Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1, like previous General Assembly resolutions 52/38 B and 53/77 S, puts the concept of transparency in conventional arms, as implemented through the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, on a par with the concept of transparency in relation to weapons of mass destruction. As the Committee will recall, the European Union and the countries associated with this statement voted against those resolutions.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1, as did last year's resolution, reinforces the attempted linkage between additional progress in the development of the United Nations Register and greater transparency concerning weapons of mass destruction. The European Union is fully aware that positions on this subject were reconsidered. However, whatever the views on the way to promote transparency of weapons of mass destruction, this cannot be linked either to transparency in the field of conventional weapons in general or to the United Nations Register in particular. This view of the European Union applies also to the work of the Group of Governmental Experts that will be convened in the year 2000 to discuss the development of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

For these reasons, the European Union and the States aligning themselves with my statement will be compelled to vote against draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1.

Ms. Martinic (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation wishes to refer to draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1, entitled "Transparency in armaments". In spite of the fact that the Register of Conventional Arms refers to these weapons, the principle of transparency can also be applied, together with other measures, to weapons of mass destruction and to transfers of technology for high-level military application, as pointed out in the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the continuing operation of the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms, and its further development.

That view is already reflected in operative paragraph 4 (a) of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.39, introduced by the Netherlands and co-sponsored by my delegation . For that reason, we do not consider it necessary to adopt another draft resolution on the same matter. As we have stated at earlier General Assembly sessions, my delegation believes that the development of transparency mechanisms in the

field of weapons of mass destruction should not have the effect of undermining the efficiency and effectiveness of existing mechanisms for providing transparency in conventional arms, such as the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms.

For that reason, my delegation will abstain in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1.

Mr. Du Preez (South Africa): South Africa supports the draft resolution entitled "Transparency in armaments", contained in document A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1. Our support for the draft resolution is based on our belief that the principle of transparency should also apply to nuclear weapons and to the transfers of equipment and technology directly related to the development and manufacture of such weapons. We therefore support the notion contained in the draft resolution that the need for the Register to increase transparency related to weapons of mass destruction should be further explored.

South Africa will, however, abstain in the voting on operative paragraph 4 (b) of the draft resolution as we do not believe that a linkage concerning weapons of mass destruction should be established with the current Register, which deals with conventional weapons.

Mr. Al-Ahmed (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to join the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We have heard the last speaker in explanation of position or vote before a decision is taken on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1.

I call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1, entitled "Transparency in armaments", was introduced by the representative of Egypt at the Committee's 17th meeting, on 27 October 1999. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1 are listed in the draft resolution itself. Saudi Arabia has also become a sponsor of this draft resolution.

Separate votes have been requested on the eighth preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 4 (b).

The Committee will now vote on the eighth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1, which reads as follows:

"*Stressing* the need to achieve universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction and the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons and on Their Destruction, with a view to realizing the goal of the total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

India, Israel

Abstaining:

Canada, Cuba, Pakistan

The eighth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A.C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1 was retained by 132 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Canada informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now vote on operative paragraph 4 (b) of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1, which reads as follows:

> "*Requests* the Secretary-General, with the assistance of the Group of Governmental Experts to be convened in the year 2000 and taking into account the views submitted by Member States, to report to it at its fifty-fifth session on:
>
> (b) The elaboration of practical means for the development of the Register in order to increase transparency related to weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons, and to transfers of equipment and technology directly related to the development and manufacture of such weapons".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic Republic of Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Andorra, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Argentina, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, Georgia, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Uruguay, Uzbekistan

Operative paragraph 4 (b) of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1 was retained by 77 votes to 45, with 16 abstentions.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now vote on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1, as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Angola, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel,

Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

Abstaining:

Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, China, Georgia, India, Japan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Uruguay, Uzbekistan

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1, as a whole, was adopted by 81 votes to 45, with 13 abstentions.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now call on those delegations wishing to explain their vote or position on the draft resolution just adopted.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China has always advocated the complete prohibition and total elimination of all weapons of mass destruction. To this end, ultimately it is necessary to adopt measures of transparency regarding these weapons. So far the international community has already worked out Conventions on the complete prohibition of chemical and biological weapons. The questions concerning transparency and verification for these two categories of weapons of mass destruction have either been settled or are being settled.

First and foremost, in the field of nuclear armaments is the promotion of the process of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear proliferation. The countries possessing the largest and most advanced nuclear arsenals should continue to take the lead by drastically reducing their nuclear arsenals and abandoning double standards or multiple standards on the question of proliferation so as to create conditions for the ultimate achievement of complete transparency and the total elimination of nuclear weapons.

Transparency for nuclear arsenals has to be set against the background of peace, security, stability and confidence, and should be coupled with the process of negotiations on nuclear disarmament. At present some countries are still pursuing the nuclear doctrine of first use of nuclear weapons, promoting vigorously an anti-ballistic missile system that undermines the strategic balance and frequently using or threatening the use of force in international relations. Under these circumstances, the conditions are not ripe to call for non-discriminatory openness and transparency; and it is not fair, either.

For these reasons, and based on the fact that we have different points of view on the reconvening of the Group of Governmental Experts to address transparency in armaments and extending the scope of the Register, the Chinese delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1.

Mr. Itzhaki (Israel): My delegation voted against this draft resolution since we do not consider it necessary or useful to expand the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. In our view, such an expansion may impair the functioning of this instrument. Instead, we maintain that efforts should be devoted to encouraging those States that have not yet done so to join the Register.

In this regard, we are also surprised that some of the sponsors of the draft resolution from neighbouring countries in the Middle East call for expanding the Register while they themselves have so far failed to submit reports under the existing one.

Finally, as Israel submits its report to the United Nations Register on a yearly basis, we still maintain that transparency with regard to military holdings, both through imports and local production, can be effective only if based on regional arms control agreements and on principles of reciprocity and comprehensiveness.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): That brings to a close all our activity on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.21/Rev.1.

Since we are now exactly at the 24-hour point and ready for the consideration of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, that brings us back to cluster 1. If no delegation wishes to make a general statement, I shall now call on those delegations wishing to explain their position or vote before a decision is taken on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1.

Mr. Pearson (New Zealand): Mr. Chairman, could you please clarify what we are considering at this point?

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We are considering draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1. I have New Zealand on the list to speak before a decision is taken on this draft resolution.

Mr. Pearson (New Zealand): I do not wish to make a statement before a decision is taken. I want to make a statement in the context of a paragraph vote.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I suggest that the Ambassador of New Zealand make his statement at this point so that action can be taken on the draft. I greatly respect what you are saying, but since the paragraphs are part of the draft resolution, I think there is a certain logic to your making your statement before the draft resolution is put before the Committee for a decision. So I would ask you to make your statement.

Mr. Pearson (New Zealand): I am taking the floor on behalf of Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa and Sweden to explain our vote on operative paragraph 9 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons".

The language in this paragraph raises significant problems for our delegations. In particular, we do not consider that the calls in this paragraph are consistent with the mandate for the 2000 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Review Conference. That mandate is clear and unambiguous. It is set down in decision 1 of the 1995 NPT Review and Extension Conference, dealing with the strengthening of the review process for the Treaty. It is on the basis of this mandate that the work of the 2000 Review Conference will proceed and decisions will be taken.

That is a consensus mandate. We consider that the language before us in operative paragraph 9 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 is misleading and strays from that mandate. It raises questions about the status of the agreements reached at the 1995 Review Conference, and it attempts to prejudge the outcome of the 2000 Review Conference. We consider that the imperative in 2000 is to ensure the full implementation of the 1995 decisions and resolution and not merely their reaffirmation. We also consider it would be imprudent for this Committee to attempt to prejudge or pre-empt the outcomes of next year's Review Conference.

As States parties to the NPT, our seven delegations feel obliged, therefore, to abstain in the voting on operative paragraph 9.

Mr. Aamiry (Jordan): I should like to associate our delegation with the statement just made by the representative of New Zealand.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I now call on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons", was introduced by the representative of Japan at the Committee's 18th meeting, on 28 October 1999. The sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 are listed in the draft resolution itself and in document A/C.1/54/INF/2. In addition, the following countries have become sponsors of the draft resolution: Austria, Australia, Canada, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal and Spain.

Separate votes have been requested on the second preambular paragraph and on operative paragraphs 1 and 9.

The Committee will now vote on the second preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, which reads as follows:

> "*Bearing in mind* the recent nuclear tests, as well as the regional situations, which pose a challenge to international efforts to strengthen the global regime of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of

Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia

Against:
India

Abstaining:
Bhutan, Israel, Pakistan, Sierra Leone

The second preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 was retained by 130 votes to 1, with 4 abstentions.

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now vote on operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, which reads as follows:

"*Reaffirms* the importance of achieving the universality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, and calls upon States not parties to the Treaty to accede to it without delay and without conditions".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:
Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia

Against:
India, Israel

Abstaining:
Bhutan, Cuba, Pakistan

Operative paragraph 1 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 was retained by 134 votes to 2, with 3 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegations of Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now vote on operative paragraph 9 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, which reads as follows:

"*Underlines* the vital importance of the 2000 Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons for the preservation and strengthening of the regime anchored therein, and calls upon all States parties to that Treaty to reaffirm the decisions as well as the resolution adopted by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Treaty, and to intensify their efforts with a view to reaching an agreement on updated objectives for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, based on the review of the achievements since 1995".

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bhutan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kazakhstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Monaco, Mongolia, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Swaziland, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia

Against:

France

Abstaining:

Algeria, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Jordan, Kenya, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mexico, New Zealand, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Russian Federation, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, United States of America, Uruguay

Operative paragraph 9 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 was retained by 103 votes to 1, with 27 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Lebanon informed the Secretariat that it had intended to abstain.]

Mr. Lin Kuo-chung (Secretary of the Committee): The Committee will now vote on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 as a whole.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cameroon, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Zambia

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Algeria, Bhutan, China, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, France, India, Israel, Mauritius, Myanmar, Pakistan, Russian Federation

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, as a whole, was adopted by 128 votes to none, with 12 abstentions.

[Subsequently, the delegation of Lebanon informed the Secretariat that it had intended to vote in favour.]

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now call on those representatives who wish to explain their votes or positions on the decisions just taken.

Ms. Kunadi (India): The delegation of India wishes to state its views with regard to certain aspects of the draft resolution on which it wishes to reserve its position.

India has an unwavering commitment to nuclear disarmament and the goal of the elimination of nuclear weapons globally. That is also the main objective of this draft resolution. However, the instrument designed to deal with nuclear weapons and promote global nuclear disarmament and genuine non-proliferation in all its aspects, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), has proved to be ineffective. The goal of global nuclear non-proliferation can be achieved if the international community looks beyond the old framework of the NPT and moves towards the goal of equal and legitimate security for all through global nuclear disarmament.

This year's draft resolution has added new elements — a moratorium on the production of fissile material in operative paragraph 4 (b), and the International Atomic Energy Agency Model Protocol in operative paragraph 8 — which are derived from the NPT framework. We also feel that the reference to nuclear tests in the second preambular paragraph is extraneous to this draft resolution. We called for separate votes on the second preambular paragraph and operative paragraph 1 and cast negative votes to express our reservations.

We also wish to state for the record that we do not agree with a number of the recommendations of the Tokyo Forum report, which is referred to in the sixth preambular paragraph.

Though we are not in a position to agree to several elements in this draft resolution we have maintained our abstention, given that we have no disagreement with the objective being sought: the global elimination of nuclear weapons. However, we feel that the essential elements regarding the political will and the call for negotiations are lacking in the draft resolution.

Mr. Grey (United States of America): My delegation supported draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons". We did so because this draft resolution offers a more realistic vision of nuclear disarmament than other draft resolutions presented, both in terms of what has been accomplished to date and in terms of the difficult tasks that lie ahead. The United States is firmly committed to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons but remains convinced that this can be accomplished only through a step-by-step process. For the international community the next agreed step is a cut-off in the production of fissionable material, and no further delays in getting those negotiations going should be tolerated.

As for bilateral steps, while the United States may share the sponsors' optimism in looking beyond START III, as reflected in this draft resolution's operative paragraph 4 (d), our focus for now is simply to get the START III talks under way and headed in the right direction.

Although we supported the draft resolution, my Government has reservations regarding operative paragraph 9 and thus abstained in the voting on it. The United States of course agrees with the vital importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) and is working together with others for its successful year 2000 Review Conference. However, we believe it inappropriate for the First Committee either to detail actions the Review Conference should take, such as reaffirmations, decisions, etc., or to specify Review Conference results. This prejudges what the Review Conference will do. The United States fully expects that the States parties will undertake what has been termed a backward and forward look at next year's NPT Review Conference, as agreed at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. Just how that is done should be up to the Review Conference itself to decide.

Mr. Hu Xiaodi (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation agrees with the draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1, aimed at the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. However, this draft resolution also has some important defects. For instance, it fails to refer to the basic principle that countries possessing the largest and most advanced nuclear arsenals have special responsibilities in nuclear disarmament. Nor does it call for the abandonment of the nuclear doctrine characterized by the first use of nuclear weapons. Preventing the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty from being diminished or dissolved and curbing anti-ballistic missiles, which undermine the strategic balance of the world are preconditions for the promotion of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1 fails to mention this. In addition, many elements contained in the Tokyo Forum report are neither realistic nor reasonable. The Chinese delegation cannot agree to the reference to this report contained in draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1.

For these reasons, the Chinese delegation abstained in the voting on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1. We

hope that the relevant draft resolution can be improved next year so as to make it possible for us to support it.

Mr. Abdullayev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian delegation would like to give the reasons for its vote on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1. Our explanation in this case is especially necessary because we have traditionally supported draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament proposed by the delegation of Japan.

We have been impressed by the realistic approach of the draft resolutions submitted by Japan, unlike that of other draft resolutions on nuclear disarmament proposed for consideration by the First Committee's consideration. I observe with satisfaction that this realistic approach has been retained this year as well. We could on the whole support this draft resolution in other circumstances, with the exception, of course, of operative paragraph 9, about which we have some doubts. However, we abstained in the voting not only because of what the draft resolution contains but also because of what it does not contain. The draft resolution makes no reference to the problem of preservation and compliance with the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. There is a deep organic link between preserving the ABM Treaty and nuclear disarmament overall. The ABM Treaty is part of the process of reducing strategic weapons, including, of course, nuclear weapons. The lack of a direct reference in the draft resolution to the need to preserve and have strict compliance with the ABM Treaty is the major, compelling reason that forced us to abstain in the voting.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Algeria supports all efforts for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. Nonetheless, my delegation believes that this draft resolution is a duplication of effort and in some ways even contradicts draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.41, entitled "Nuclear disarmament", which Algeria traditionally supports and co-sponsors, and which was adopted just yesterday by the Committee. Furthermore, the title given to this draft resolution does not seem to us to reflect exactly the content of this document. Some of the elements incorporated in this draft resolution are not in line with our view of nuclear disarmament, which is completely in accord with the view of the Non-Aligned Movement. Furthermore, the language used this year in operative paragraph 9 raises a certain number of problems because it detracts from the agreement painstakingly reached by the 1995 Review and Extension Conference. As Algeria sees it, the 2000 Review Conference will decide whether new principles and objectives should be agreed upon for non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament. That is why Algeria abstained in the voting on operative paragraph 9 and on the draft resolution as a whole.

We voted in favour of the second preambular paragraph, and we understand that it refers to all nuclear tests of any kind, wherever they occur.

Mr. Salazar (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation abstained in the voting on operative paragraph 9 for the same reasons put forward very well by the Ambassador of New Zealand before the voting.

Mr. Al-Hariri (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation has always supported efforts to achieve complete nuclear disarmament, but we would like to enter our reservations regarding the fifth preambular paragraph of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9 and operative paragraph 4 (a), concerning the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. My delegation regrets that no reference was made to the fact that Israel is the only country in the Middle East that has not adhered to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and is preventing the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, which is closely linked to nuclear disarmament and the elimination of nuclear weapons.

Mr. Forquenot de la Fortelle (France) (*spoke in French*): France regrets not having been able, as in the three previous years, to vote in favour of the draft resolution sponsored by Japan on nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons. The wording in operative paragraph 9 causes my country to have some serious reservations, even if the draft resolution as a whole reflects my country's position and its commitment to non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

We have two reservations. First, in terms of procedure, it seems to us that it is not up to the General Assembly to decide what the outcome of the Review Conference of States parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should be. Secondly, as to substance, we consider that the text's call for an agreement on updated objectives for nuclear non-proliferation seems to us to prejudge the work of the Review Conference. Once again, it would be up to the States parties during the spring 2000 Conference to come to an agreement on the best ways and means to preserve and consolidate the regime based on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Mr. Al-Hassan (Oman): My delegation was present when the vote was taken on operative paragraph 9 of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.9/Rev.1. Had we been attentively present, we would not have participated in the voting on this operative paragraph, for reasons that are well known. Among those reasons is that it reiterates new language regarding the resolution of 1995 on the question of the Middle East, which we totally oppose.

Ms. Fiffe (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): Once again, this year the Cuban delegation abstained in the voting on the draft resolution entitled "Nuclear disarmament with a view to the ultimate elimination of nuclear weapons". The basic reason for our abstention is that in our view this draft resolution does not establish a minimum basis of universal acceptance in endeavours for nuclear disarmament. As we have pointed out since this draft resolution was introduced, in spite of its title, its real focus is not on nuclear disarmament but basically on questions that relate to non-proliferation, with special emphasis on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, an instrument that, as we have said, is discriminatory in nature and to which Cuba is not a party for well-known reasons. We believe that continuing to insist on partial approaches, as in this case, does not contribute to creating the necessary conditions for progress towards the ultimate objective of nuclear disarmament. On the contrary, they serve as a pretext for those who use them to promote their obsolete nuclear military doctrines.

For all these reasons, my delegation was not able to vote in favour of this draft resolution.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): That concludes our debate and action on all the draft resolutions before the Committee this morning. Unfortunately, because of time constraints we are not going to be able to take a decision on draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30, bearing in mind the request that was made by the representative of Canada.

Mr. Westdal (Canada): In view of the change of time might I suggest that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30 attend a meeting in Conference Room A as soon as we have finished this meeting. That will enable us to avoid delaying this afternoon's proceedings.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Unless the representative of Algeria objects, the Committee will meet at 3 p.m. sharp. There is really no alternative, so I do ask for your understanding.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): I beg your indulgence, but I have a proposal to make that would probably help facilitate the work of many delegations. Since tomorrow we have a meeting on Antarctica and we have only one draft resolution left to consider, would it not be possible, from the point of view of the Secretariat and the Chair, to consider this draft resolution before we begin our consideration of the question of Antarctica and thus avoid having to come back this afternoon for just one draft resolution? That would enable us to settle an enormous number of problems and to avoid exhausting the scant resources available to us with one meeting, which would probably not last more than 45 minutes.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I must inform the representative of Algeria that, unfortunately, because of certain technical problems that will not be possible. I ask for his understanding. For my part, I pledge to try to make the meeting this afternoon as brief as possible.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/54/PV.27

General Assembly

Official Records

Fifty-fourthsession

First Committee

27th Meeting

Tuesday, 9 November 1999, 3 p.m.

New York

Chairman: Mr. Gonzalez ..... (Chile)

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda items 64, 65 and 67 to 85 (*continued*)

Action on all draft resolutions submitted under all items

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): At this morning's meeting I informed representatives that the Committee would proceed this afternoon to take a decision on the remaining draft resolution appearing in Secretariat Informal Paper No. 8 in cluster 1, in other words, draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30.

I call on the representative of Canada.

Mr. Westdal (Canada): I wish to advise that further to a meeting we have just held of all the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.30, on the fissile material cut-off treaty, and with their entire agreement, I wish to withdraw this draft resolution from consideration.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): We have therefore concluded the draft resolutions.

Do any other delegations wish to speak? It appears not. We have thus concluded the work entrusted to the Committee.

Conclusion of the third stage of the Committee's work

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): An announcement is needed with regard to the draft resolution on the question of Antarctica, but I would prefer the Secretariat to do that, so I call now on the Secretary of the Committee.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary of the Committee): The meeting to discuss the question of Antarctica was scheduled for tomorrow, Wednesday. However, a request has been received that the meeting be held on Thursday morning instead.

Mr. Reimaa (Finland): It is my understanding that we are approaching the end of the session, but before closing, let me take this opportunity to say a few words of thanks on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union, the associated countries Cyprus and Malta and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) countries members of the European Economic Area (EEA).

We would like to extend to you, Sir, our sincere congratulations on the successful conclusion of the Committee's work. We would like to thank you for the efficient way you have conducted the work of the Committee, enabling us to conclude it in an organized way and on time. With your constantly good spirits and sense of humour, Mr. Chairman, it has been a real pleasure to work with you.

We wish also to thank the other members of the Bureau and all the staff of the Secretariat who have supported them in their responsibilities. We would also like to express our appreciation to the Secretary of the First Committee, Mr. Lin, who with his long experience has been a valuable help to all of us.

Our sincere thanks go also to the excellent interpreters, translators and conference officers who have made the smooth conduct of business possible.

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This record contains the original texts of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, Room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

Finally, we would like to say how much we have appreciated the good and constructive cooperation with all our colleagues and delegations during the First Committee's session this year and certainly we are looking forward to continuing that fruitful cooperation next year.

Mr. Soufan (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): On this same occasion allow me, on behalf of the Arab Group, which Lebanon has the honour to chair this month, to express to you, Sir, our deep thanks for and appreciation of the efforts you have made in order to bring the work of the Committee to a final successful conclusion. Your conciliatory efforts won consensus for many draft resolutions. We hope that approach will be solidified in the future in order to promote the concept of consensus, remove the threat to humanity of the armaments race and achieve greater stability and security for the international community. We are confident that your spirit of cooperation and dialogue will be helpful in achieving our goals. You provided equal and fair opportunities for all delegations to express their views.

I should like to pay tribute to members of the Bureau and express appreciation to the Secretariat staff, interpreters, translators and conference officers, who worked together to ensure the success of the Committee in completing its work.

Mr. du Preez (South Africa): On behalf of the States members of the Non-Aligned Movement, and on behalf of other countries associated with the Movement, I wish to extend our appreciation to you, Sir, and to other members of the Bureau, as well as to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Dhanapala, to the Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, and the Secretary of the First Committee for the way in which they have led our work.

We would also like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretariat staff, the interpreters and translators and other United Nations staff members who have been essential to our work.

Finally, I should like to thank colleagues for the cooperation that we as a delegation have received from many in this room, and we look forward to working with them when the Committee meets again.

Mr. Pokaz (Croatia): On behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, which my Permanent Representative, Ambassador Ivan Šimonović, currently chairs, I wish to express to you, Sir, our sincere congratulations and gratitude for the able way in which you have guided the deliberations of the First Committee to a successful and timely conclusion. Your abundant diplomatic experience was essential to the success of this exercise.

In the same way we also want to thank the other members of the Bureau and all the staff of the Secretariat who supported them so effectively as they carried out their heavy responsibilities. A special word of gratitude goes to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Dhanapala, who has been with us throughout the session. Our deep appreciation goes also to the excellent interpreters, translators, conference officers and other United Nations staff members who have been so essential to our work. Without their effective support we would not have been able to complete our session. I thank them all very much.

Mr. Mesdoua (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): My delegation was going to speak on behalf of the Group of African States once you, Sir, had made your concluding statement on the work of the Committee. I also want to say that my delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of South Africa on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The African Group would like to express its satisfaction at the way in which you, Sir, have directed the work of the Committee. In spite of some rather sensitive matters on the agenda, your experience, your human and professional qualities and your determination to ensure that the rules of procedure were abided by right from the beginning of the work, without any bias in any way, have been greatly appreciated by the African States.

We would like to thank all the other members of the Bureau and all delegations for their cooperation. On behalf of the African Group I would also like to say how much we have appreciated the regular presence of and the interest shown in our work by Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, and Vladimir Petrovsky and Abdelkader Bensmail also, whose counsel and advice greatly contributed to the happy conclusion of our work. We would also like to salute the remarkable amount of work carried out by all those who have supported the work of the delegations. I pay tribute to the Secretariat, including Mr. Lin and his team, and the members of Conference Services — the interpreters and the translator — and all those behind the scenes who have contributed to the success of our work.

Before concluding I should like to thank you, Sir, yet again and hope that you have a good trip home. On behalf of the African Group may I say that we wish everyone in the room the best for the new millennium, a new millennium that we hope will be full of peace and prosperity for all peoples and all nations.

Mr. Hoang Chi Trung (Viet Nam): It is a great honour for me to speak on behalf of the Member States of the Asian Group. First, I wish to express our deepest gratitude and appreciation for the efficient and admirable way in which you, Sir, have guided the First Committee to a very successful conclusion. We are particularly impressed with the high standards and disciplines you have applied to the work of the Committee this year.

Our sincere thanks also go to the other members of the Bureau, particularly the Secretary and other staff members of the Secretariat whose help has facilitated our work to a great extent. The delegations of the Asian Group are also very thankful for the spirit of cooperation they have enjoyed from the delegations of other Groups. Finally, may I wish you, Sir, and other members of the Bureau all the best.

Mrs. Fritsche (Liechtenstein): I have the honour to congratulate you, Sir, and to thank you on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States for presiding over the work of the Committee in a most efficient and effective way. Due to your able leadership we were in a position to deal expeditiously with the issues before us and to conclude our work as scheduled. Our congratulations also go to the other members of the Bureau and to the Secretary of the Committee, Mr. Lin, as well as to his colleagues in the Secretariat.

I furthermore wish to express my appreciation to the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Mr. Dhanapala, as well as to Mr. Petrovsky and to Mr. Bensmail, Secretary-General and Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, for facilitating our work.

It was not always easy to guide our work, Mr. Chairman, but you have done an outstanding job in managing an orderly consideration of and action on all draft resolutions. We gladly submitted to the discipline that you imposed on the Committee, including the use — or non-use — of cellular phones.

Last but not least, let me express a word of special appreciation for the excellent work done by the interpreters, translators, sound engineers, conference officers and Secretariat staff in charge of producing and distributing documents. Without their valuable contribution we could not have achieved the same result.

Mr. Aamiry (Jordan): I seek your assistance, Sir. My delegation has been extremely busy of late, which meant I was absent from the room when the vote was taken on quite a number of draft resolutions. Is there a way that I could provide the Bureau with our voting on that list of draft resolutions in a timely way so that it will appear in the reports of the First Committee to the General Assembly? I ask this from the floor for the benefit of other delegations that might — only might — be in the same position as our delegation.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I would suggest that once we have concluded all the formalities and congratulations and when the meeting has concluded, you could express the concerns you have about the draft resolutions in which you did not have the opportunity to participate.

Ms. Martinic (Argentina) (*spoke in [Spanish]*): It has been a privilege and reason for pride for the Argentine delegation to work under your chairmanship, Sir. As we said when we started our work, you represent Chile, a country friendly to Argentina. Therefore, I should like to thank you most warmly on behalf of the delegation of Argentina for the way in which you have conducted our work. It has not been an easy session for the First Committee. However, your diplomatic skills and personal talent, together with your fine sense of humour, have made it possible to conclude our work in a satisfactory fashion both in time and in content.

Through you, Sir, I wish to address our thanks to Under-Secretary-General Dhanapala, to the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, to Mr. Lin, the Secretary of the Committee, and to the staff of the Secretariat, including the interpreters.

On behalf of our delegation, I wish to thank you, Sir, once more, and very warmly, for the way in which you have conducted our work.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Argentina, and through her I wish to thank her husband, who replaced her occasionally in the work of the Committee — but only very occasionally. I think we would prefer to have had her here all the time.

Mr. Fruchtbaum (Solomon Islands): I just want to say to you, Sir, that I will be happy to greet and speak to you in any diplomats' bar, saloon or restaurant in any part of the world.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Thank you very much. I was rather concerned because I had not yet received that invitation from you and I was rather worried about it.

Mr. Miranda (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): I do not wish to take up time as I know that you, Sir, wish to make a concluding statement, but our delegation could not fail to congratulate you on the magnificent way in which you have conducted the debates of the Committee, and through you, your country, of which you are a worthy representative both personally and professionally. Our delegation wishes to highlight the progress that has been made in the Committee's development, which would not have been adequately carried out had you not been presiding over our debates.

Briefly through you, Sir, I also wish to thank Ambassador Dhanapala. By his support and presence here he has given us encouragement to continue with our debates and with the meetings. Furthermore, I should like to thank the entire Secretariat for its very useful support and cooperation throughout the long weeks we have spent together.

The Chairman (*spoke in Spanish*): Before dealing with the substantive aspects I want to emphasize in a very special way that a promise has been kept. When we began the meetings of this session everybody promised, without even knowing me, that they would cooperate with me, and that is really a risk. Not only did delegations keep that promise, but even more than I expected. I am extremely grateful. I feel very stimulated and I should like to go on for another two weeks — well, no; I do not really think so. But had it not been for your cooperation we would not have been able to conclude the work in time or in substance. I shall talk about the substance later.

At the same time the cooperation of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, represented by the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Dhanapala, was crucial for me. Had it not been for his opportune and constant presence here we could not even have voted on the draft resolutions. He was really very useful to us, and we have had a very fruitful dialogue. I am surrounded by people who have helped me.

As well as the magnificent interpretation — which is almost an issue of pride, but the interpretation is always very good here — I also wish to thank the conference officers. It is almost part of the inventory of the United Nations to have excellent conference officers. The two excellent ladies who helped us were really perfect. It is amazing that all these details finally allowed us to ensure a conclusion to the work of the Committee. However substantive that work, it cannot be concluded if these details do not exist. I wish to express my thanks with regard to this point.

I should like to thank all members for their cooperation and for the way in which they have understood my rather different style of conducting the debate. It was a bit too slow for some and too quick for others.

According to the timetable, we have concluded the last stage of the Committee's work with action on all draft resolutions and decisions on disarmament and international security as scheduled. I should like to seize the opportunity to exercise the privilege and duty of the Chairman to make a few concluding remarks on the work of the Committee at this last session of the twentieth century. It is a privilege because of the unique position that the Chairman plays in the Committee. He has a captive audience, ready to hear his overview. It is a duty because the Chairman must speak, to the extent possible, in the name of all participants and thus must maintain a balanced and impartial position. To this I committed myself with great emphasis.

The United Nations has always stood for dialogue among nations, and the First Committee has again taken the pulse of the world in the field of international security and disarmament. Issues of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons continued to receive a large share of attention from Member States, and rightly so. Of 52 draft resolutions and decisions, 17 dealing with nuclear weapons and related issues were acted upon. The debate and the negotiations and the action taken this year have strongly reflected the international community's deep concern at the impasse, bilaterally and multilaterally, on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We must consider that the situation is static at best but is perhaps worsening.

It is important to bear in mind that the United States of America and the Russian Federation continue to reduce their nuclear stockpiles to levels agreed upon under the Treaty on the Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms — START I — and that both countries are maintaining cooperative risk-reduction activities. That

situation is greatly welcomed, as are recent reports that the two States are exchanging nuclear scientists at command and control centres to reduce the possibilities of misinterpretation of missile launch signals at the end of the year during the Y2K transition. I believe that the general consensus in the Committee would urge further dialogue between the two States.

Multilaterally, we are working under increasingly frustrating conditions. The need to consolidate the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as a cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime was underscored. The Committee has underlined the significance of the April-May 2000 Review Conference of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. However, the Conference faces a severe test of the will of the States parties to advance the full implementation of the decisions and resolutions adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference.

Concerns were also expressed at the continuing impasse in the work of the Conference on Disarmament, and appeals that it fully play its role as the single multilateral negotiating forum for disarmament were widespread. The Conference on Disarmament faces a crucial year to advance the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation agenda by beginning substantive work on priority items as soon as possible.

The First Committee had an unprecedented debate on the issue of missile proliferation and missile defence. As we all know, this issue has been attracting growing international concern because of recent events, especially because of its impact on strategic stability, nuclear doctrines, the further reduction and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and possible repercussions on disarmament- and security-related treaties and other legal instruments. In my opinion the two draft resolutions presented this year make clear that further constructive study and intergovernmental discussion on the issue are indispensable.

Even while the First Committee was meeting, the first State to sign the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, in 1996, rejected ratification of that Treaty. I am heartened that the unilateral moratoriums of the five permanent members of the Security Council on nuclear explosive testing are being maintained, as are the those of the two States that tested nuclear devices last year. The Committee added its voice by endorsing, in October, the Final Declaration of the Vienna Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, thus sustaining the process for achieving the entry into force of that Treaty. It is a matter for regret that efforts to add a new impetus to the stalled process of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, such as the new elements in the resolution on a new agenda, have not yet come to fruition.

On a positive note, the Committee welcomed the principles and guidelines on nuclear-weapon-free zones adopted by the Disarmament Commission this year. The Committee also reaffirmed its support for existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and encouraged the establishment of further zones on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned. The Committee has reasserted the importance of the two existing conventions on chemical and biological weapons by adopting respective draft resolutions on them without a vote. It is encouraging to note that work will continue in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, with the support of the international community, to strengthen the implementation of the provisions of the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Committee has also urged parties to the Biological Weapons Convention to conclude their negotiations on a verification protocol for that instrument by the time of the fifth review conference of States parties.

The First Committee has once again reaffirmed its interest in pursuing an international dialogue on the subject of the prevention of an arms race in outer space. It is now in the hands of the Conference on Disarmament to pursue the request of the Committee to begin that dialogue. It is highly encouraging that the international consensus on the need to tackle the illicit trade in small arms is growing. In fact, with respect to the United Nations, it took a step forward this fall when four draft resolutions dealt with this item. A true dialogue was held and further understanding was reached on the convening of a United Nations conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects in June/July 2001. The preparatory process will begin in February 2000. In the face of the enormity of the damage wrought by the problem of illicit small arms proliferation and hence its connection to complex civil strife and drug trafficking, the task ahead is challenging.

There is under way at the United Nations a quiet revolution uniting willing and able countries that are peaceful and financially secure with countries in post-conflict situations, helping the latter to re-establish their security and economic and social progress. The First Committee welcomed the activities of the group of States

interested in peace-building through practical disarmament measures.

In the quest to rid the world of the scourge of anti-personnel landmines, the Committee has lent majority support to efforts along two tracks. It has welcomed the convening in December this year of the First Annual Conference of the States Parties to Amended Protocol II, on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of mines, booby traps and other devices. It also stressed the importance of the effective implementation of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-personnel Mines and on Their Destruction — the Ottawa Convention — which successfully held its First Meeting of the States Parties this year and will hold its Second Meeting in September 2000.

The Committee also gave its support once again to disarmament efforts at the regional level by welcoming the revitalization of the United Nations Regional Centres in Africa and in Latin America and the Caribbean, and by commending the continuing operation of the Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Asia and the Pacific. It is regrettable to note that the draft resolution adopted on the fourth special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament was simply a procedural one, keeping the item "alive" rather than being substantive. The convening of this fourth special session is very important in the field of disarmament, particularly in view of the current international environment and also the dynamics of international events. That cannot be disregarded.

The next session of the First Committee will take place during the Millennium Assembly in the year 2000. There will be much reflection between now and then about the significance of the end of the century and the arrival of the millennium for disarmament and international security. It is hard to avoid the feeling that history is being made and that trends are being set. As members know, there will be a preparatory process for the Millennium Assembly. I believe it is incumbent upon us in the First Committee to make sure that the contributions that disarmament can make to international peace and security are recognized and highlighted in the preparatory process and the Millennium Assembly itself.

I believe that the activities of the First Committee this year have contributed to advancing the general cause of disarmament and international security, with the problems and defects we have mentioned. That assertion must be put into perspective. We have checked the barometer of international relations in this respect. That is a mere statement. The torch of responsibility to continue efforts at dialogue and to encourage negotiations, especially on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, will now pass to other international forums. May their work bear positive results one day.

On a personal note, as Chairman of the Committee I should like to thank all the members of the Committee most sincerely, in particular the members of the Bureau who cooperated with me so effectively, for the cooperation they have extended to me during the session. It was indeed a singular honour and privilege for me to work with people so distinguished and knowledgeable in the field of disarmament. I wish to thank you all sincerely for all your efforts.

I also wish to express and reiterate my deepest thanks and gratitude to the Vice-Chairmen of the Committee, Mr. Günther Seibert of Germany, Mr. Kestutis Sadauskas of Lithuania and Mr. Tarig Ali Bakhit of Sudan and the Rapporteur, Mr. Carlos Sorreta of the Philippines. I am deeply grateful for the assistance, camaraderie, advice and *mise en garde*. Thank you.

Finally, let me on behalf of the Committee thank again Mr. Jin Yongjian, Under-Secretary-General for General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services; Mr. Jayantha Dhanapala, Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs; Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament; and Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung, Secretary of the Committee, and all his collaborators in the Secretariat. My special thanks to all the young people — which makes me rather nostalgic — who are sitting behind me and are very acrobatic. I wish to thank them for the good work they have done to facilitate the work of the Committee.

Finally, and no less importantly, I wish to reiterate my special thanks to our interpreters, translators, verbatim reporters, press officers, conference officers and documents officers who have been patient with us, and the sound engineers and all others who work behind the scenes to bring the work of the Committee to a successful conclusion.

The final thing I have to say is that in accordance with the programme of work and the timetable of the Committee, on Thursday there will be a general debate on draft resolutions with regard to agenda item 66, the question of Antarctica. I also wish to remind delegations that tomorrow, Wednesday, 9 November, is the deadline

for the list of speakers in the general debate and submission of draft resolutions with regard to that topic.

The next meeting will be on Thursday at 10 a.m. here in this room.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.

United Nations A/C.1/54/PV.28

General Assembly
Fifty-fourth session

Official Records

First Committee
28th Meeting
Thursday, 11 November 1999, 3 p.m.
New York

Chairman: Mr. Gonzalez ..... (Chile)

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Sadauskas (Lithuania), Vice-Chairman, took the chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 66

Statement by the Chairman

The Acting Chairman: In accordance with the programme of work and timetable, the Committee will commence general debate on the question of Antarctica and consideration of an action on the draft resolution under agenda item 66.

As members will recall, the question of Antarctica was initially included on the agenda of the General Assembly at its thirty-eighth session, in 1983. Each successive session of the General Assembly has been seized of the question of Antarctica, an issue that has assumed global importance for the world today as well as for future generations.

Since 1959, when the Antarctic Treaty was concluded to ensure, in the interest of all mankind, that Antarctica should continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and should not become the theme or object of international discord, the Consultative Parties have been meeting regularly and have adopted a number of documents through which they have established legal norms to protect the continent's environment, with special emphasis on the conservation of Antarctic living resources.

In addition, they have created a number of bodies to coordinate their activities. Antarctica, its associated ecosystem and the Southern Ocean play a critical role in the global environmental system. For years we have grown increasingly aware of the intimate and unbreakable interdependence between Antarctica and the rest of the world. Major processes of interaction among the atmosphere, oceans, ice and biota affect the entire global system through feedback mechanisms, biogeochemical cycles, circulation patterns, transport of energy and pollutants and changes of ice mass balance.

Currently, the principal environmental concerns in Antarctica are related to changes occurring at the global level, such as those related to depletion of the ozone layer, climate change and the effects of global warming. However, it should be remembered that in the recent past the Antarctic marine environment of whales and seals has also been exploited, leading to the near extinction of some species. While this exploitation has now ceased, its impact on the marine ecosystem is still evident today.

In comparison to these and the global changes, the environmental impact of human activities occurring within Antarctic today is relatively minor and localized. Although Antarctica is the least populated and industrialized continent, with minimal human activity, there is a need for constant cooperation among States if the continent is to be preserved.

Research has been conducted on the presence and transport of pollutants in Antarctic's marine and terrestrial ecosystems. Levels in Antarctica are generally extremely low, except at a few localized sites. There is also a need to address some other questions, relating to biology, geodesy and geographic information, the physics and chemistry of

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the atmosphere and solar, terrestrial and astrophysical research. Long-range pollutants in Antarctica originate predominantly in the industrialized areas of the world. Many such pollutants are transported to Antarctica in the upper atmosphere, others by ocean currents.

Air reaching Antarctica from outside must pass through the zone of cyclonic storms that surrounds the continent. Owing to minimal localized human activity, Antarctica is an ideal laboratory in which to base monitoring activities for long-range pollutants. It is important that this scientific value of Antarctica not be destroyed through local sources of contamination.

In view of the extensive deliberations by the Committee on this subject over the past several years, it has become clear to us that Antarctica should forever be used exclusively for peaceful purposes, that it should remain free of human and military installations and that it must not become a source of tension and discord.

I have tried in this brief statement to highlight the fact that the global importance of the Antarctic environment is such that its spate needs to be assessed periodically and comprehensively. I welcome the initiative now being undertaken by the Scientific Committee of Antarctic Research to develop proposals for a comprehensive report on the state of the Antarctic environment in the near future. Such a report will be appreciated, as the Madrid Protocol entered into force on 14 January 1998 and will serve as the basis for further work by the Antarctic Treaty system in protecting the Antarctic environment.

In that context, the newly established Committee for Environmental Protection would, *inter alia*, provide advice and formulate recommendations on the implementation of the Protocol for consideration at the Consultative Meetings. I should like to draw the attention of the Committee to the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/54/339, which provides comprehensive and detailed information on the subject matter, summarizing the two reports of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings and other relevant meetings that have taken place over the past three years.

Mr. Hasmy (Malaysia): I wish to express my delegation's appreciation for your succinct yet comprehensive introduction of the subject under discussion. Over the years, the debate on the question of Antarctica has undeniably been a useful exercise and has yielded positive results. Members of the United Nations have become more aware of the concerns and interests of mankind in Antarctica: in its ecosystem, its mineral and living resources, its management and its peace and stability. The debates have also highlighted the inadequacy of the Antarctic Treaty system fully to meet these concerns and challenges.

My delegation is gratified that as a result of the debate there is now far greater transparency and accountability for the activities of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties (ATCP) in Antarctica. There is also greater United Nations involvement, with the participation of the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) in Meetings of the ATCP. This has resulted in a better understanding by the international community of the issues relating to Antarctica and of the need to protect this pristine continent for the common benefit of mankind.

My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report as contained in document A/54/339. We wish that the report had been issued much earlier than just a few days ago, in order to allow for a more in-depth analysis by delegations. UNEP should be complimented for its commendable contribution to the Secretary-General's report. The report provides updated information on the activities undertaken by the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties, the Antarctic Treaty system and several international bodies to promote the protection and preservation of this vast continent. It has also highlighted the state of the Antarctic environment and has further increased our awareness of the need to protect the Antarctic environment from the impact of human activities on its fragile ecosystem.

My delegation commends the Consultative Parties for their cooperation and willingness in sharing information about their activities in Antarctica, thereby increasing transparency about what goes on there. This sharing of information began some years ago and, it is hoped, will become a regular feature of the cooperation between the ATCP and the rest of the international community.

The Madrid Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, which constitutes the most comprehensive multilateral instrument on the protection of the environment to date, entered into force on 14 January 1998. Malaysia welcomes its entry into force and the designation of Antarctica as a natural reserve devoted to peace and science, prohibiting mineral resource activities other than scientific research and setting principles and measures for the planning and conduct of all activities in the Antarctic Treaty area. Malaysia welcomes in particular the Protocol's 50-year moratorium on prospecting and

mining in Antarctica and expresses the hope that this might constitute a first but important step towards a permanent ban on mining on the continent.

With the entry into force of the Madrid Protocol, human activities in Antarctica would be further regulated to protect the Antarctic environment and its dependent and associated ecosystem. Although the Protocol has much strength, it has no enforcement mechanism of its own, leaving it to each State Party to enforce its provisions through its national law. It is of interest to note that of 27 members, only 11 have adopted original legislation to implement the Protocol. Several others have written the text of the Protocol into national law but have neglected to write clear national procedures. We regret to learn that some members of the Protocol have refused to recognize the right of the Committee for Environmental Protection to review environmental impact assessments. Environmental impact assessment goes to the heart of the ability of the Protocol to ensure that impacts from human activities are minimized.

The Committee for Environmental Protection, the only institution created by the Protocol, has adopted guidelines for environmental impact assessment in Antarctica. These are expected to improve the understanding of the assessment process and lead to a more uniform practice among Parties. However, dispute has arisen over how it could provide advice on environmental impact assessment for major projects, such as the rebuilding of a new base at the South Pole. Concerns have also been expressed about tourism activities by non-Consultative States that have yet to become party to the Madrid Protocol and are thus not subject to environmental impact assessment requirements.

The Protocol was signed with one legal loophole remaining — that is, provisions for liability for environmental damage have yet to be established so as to encourage compliance and provide the means of assigning responsibility for any environmental damage which may occur. We note that States have been slow in implementing a liability annex. We believe that there should be strict and unlimited liability. A strict regime will send a clear message to the world that in Antarctica the protection of the environment is of paramount importance.

Malaysia believes that the United Nations, as a world representative body with its network of specialized organs such UNEP, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and World Meteorological Organization (WMO), as well as the World Tourism Organization, is the most appropriate authority to enforce, administer and monitor the various scientific and non-scientific activities in Antarctica.

There has been considerable broadening of cooperation between the Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research, the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources and some United Nations specialized agencies, and this should be encouraged to ensure the protection of the Antarctic environment. The IMO, a United Nations specialized agency, is working with an ATCM expert group towards adopting a code on polar shipping. The Polar Shipping Code will alleviate the concerns expressed about the operational safety issue of ships in Antarctic waters.

The FAO is working together with relevant Antarctic bodies to intensify efforts to develop measures to address the issue of unreported, unregulated and illegal fishing. There has been a resurgence of interest in fishing in Antarctica as fisheries around the world become depleted. Equally of concern is the large-scale "scientific" whaling that is still being conducted in the Southern Whale Sanctuary. All of these activities should be curtailed or strictly regulated to ensure that the delicate balance of the Antarctic ecosystem is not disturbed.

The biggest current threat to the world's greatest "natural reserve" is the burgeoning tourism industry. The number of tourists visiting Antarctica has increased from fewer than 1500 per year in the early 1980s to over 14,000 by the 2001-02 season, as reported by International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators. In the last few years, commercial flights to the continent from Australia and New Zealand have also resumed. The high increase of visitors will have an impact on Antarctica's environment and wildlife. The World Tourism Organization should be involved in establishing a monitoring mechanism to ensure that eco-tourism is regulated in an effective manner.

There is also a reported proliferation of bases over the past half century, with over 50 scientific research stations some of which are the size of small industrial towns. These bases have sprawled into pristine areas and into seal and penguin breeding and nesting sites. The drilling at Lake Vostok for the testing of equipment for use in outer space has already raised controversy.

These various human activities are putting additional pressure on Antarctica's environment. The ability of the Antarctic environment and native flora and fauna to withstand the impacts originating within Antarctica, as well as from outside, is doubtful. Although the Rio Earth

Summit of 1992 is a somewhat distant memory, the outcome of the Summit clearly demonstrated, *inter alia*, the will and commitment of the international community collectively to address the need to stem environmental degradation in Antarctica. In this regard, my delegation would urge the ATCP to continue to implement their commitments under the Antarctic Treaty and relevant United Nations resolutions.

My delegation is pleased that on the basis of consultations on this agenda item it has been possible to reach agreement on a consensus or Chairman's text of the resolution which has just been introduced for action in this Committee. We are grateful to the delegation of the United Kingdom, acting on behalf of the ATCP countries, for making this possible.

The draft resolution is largely an updating of General Assembly resolution 51/56 of 10 December 1996. It welcomes, *inter alia*, the entry into force of the Madrid Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty, the continuing cooperation among countries undertaking scientific research activities in Antarctica and the increasing awareness of interest in Antarctica shown by the international community. It also reaffirms the conviction that, in the interest of mankind, Antarctica should continue forever to be used exclusively for peaceful purposes and that it should not become the scene or object of international discord.

It also welcomes the invitations extended to the Executive Director of UNEP to attend Consultative Meetings of the ATCP in order to assist in their substantive work and urges the Parties to continue to do so for future consultative meetings. It also welcomes the practice whereby the ATCP regularly provide information on these Meetings and other relevant information on Antarctica so as to enable the Secretary-General to submit a report for consideration by the General Assembly at its fifty-seventh session.

In conclusion, my delegation is pleased with the increased transparency of the activities of the ATCP as well as the increasing cooperation between the ATCP countries and the rest of the international community. Notwithstanding the deficiencies of the ATCP system, which we hope will be overcome over time, we are gratified that the mechanism of dialogue and cooperation that the ATCP and non-ATCP countries have forged in the context of the United Nations is working well and has yielded tangible results.

My delegation hopes the triennial debate on the question of Antarctica in this Committee will continue to provide a forum for those both within and outside the system to engage in meaningful dialogue. This should not be the end of a process, but rather the beginning of a relation based on mutual trust and cooperation to ensure that the best interests of mankind are served into the next millennium. We look forward to closer and more constructive cooperation with the ATCP countries in the coming years.

Mr. Richardson (United Kingdom): I have the honour today of addressing the First Committee of the General Assembly on behalf of the States Parties to the Antarctic Treaty.

The Antarctic Treaty Parties are pleased to record that this year marks the fortieth anniversary of that landmark, the Antarctic Treaty, which was signed by 12 States in Washington on 1 December 1959. The anniversary was commemorated earlier this year at the Twenty-third Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in Lima, at which the Lima Declaration was adopted, in the presence of the President of the Republic of Peru.

During the 40 years since its signing, a further 32 States have joined the original 12 signatories and become Parties to the Treaty. Over that period, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties (ATCP) have adopted numerous regulatory measures to provide for the effective management and governance of Antarctica. Ministers and officials from 23 Parties also met from 23 to 28 January 1999 at Ross Island in Antarctica, the first such occasion to be held in Antarctica.

By these means, the Antarctic Treaty has successfully guaranteed that this vast continent remains a region dedicated to peace, international cooperation and scientific endeavour. The importance of Antarctic science, investigating as it does also those global processes which govern the very health of this planet, takes on an ever increasing importance.

Since the General Assembly last addressed the question of Antarctica, during its fifty-first session in 1996, the intervening period has witnessed a further strengthening of the Antarctic Treaty. In 1998, Bulgaria was welcomed as the twenty-seventh Consultative Party to the Antarctic Treaty. In addition, the Treaty continues to attract new members. Earlier this year, Venezuela became the forty-fourth Party to the Treaty. Collectively, these 44 States

represent more than eighty per cent of the world's population.

An important milestone during the past three years was the entry into force in January 1998 of the Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty. The Protocol designates Antarctica as a "natural reserve, devoted to peace and science" and prescribes a series of environmental principles to govern human activities in Antarctica. Supporting those principles is a comprehensive package of tough measures to protect the Antarctic environment. Based on the Protocol, activities in Antarctica are now subject to environmental impact assessment before they can take place. The Protocol introduces an indefinite prohibition on mineral resource activities in Antarctica. It provides stringent rules on waste management and includes measures to prevent marine pollution and new provisions to protect Antarctica's wildlife.

Importantly, the Protocol also establishes a new institution, the Committee for Environmental Protection. Open to all Parties, and with observership extended as appropriate to a range of international bodies, the Committee held its inaugural meeting in 1998 at Tromso in Norway. The meeting in Lima was an occasion to demonstrate that the Committee has rapidly established itself as the primary body to give advice to the Treaty Parties, for consideration at Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meetings, on the implementation of the Protocol and on matters relating to the protection of the Antarctic environment generally. In that regard, the Parties emphasize the work of the Committee in setting procedures for environmental impact assessments. The Committee will play an increasingly important role in the operation of the Treaty.

As reported by the representative of the Netherlands at the fifty-first session of the General Assembly, the Treaty Parties had already undertaken active steps to ensure practical implementation of the Protocol well ahead of its entry into force. As a result, important progress has been made towards the comprehensive and rigorous enforcement of the Protocol throughout Antarctica.

The principal impetus behind the success and on-going development of the Antarctic Treaty remains the Meetings of the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties. Since the Assembly's fifty-first session, three such Meetings have been convened, in Christchurch, New Zealand, in Tromso, Norway and, this year, in Lima. At each of these Meetings, further steps have been taken to strengthen the regulatory framework for Antarctica and protection of the Antarctic environment.

At the 1997 Meeting in Christchurch, significant progress was made on the issue of emergency response and contingency planning, and it was agreed to hold regular contingency exercises. The issue was further explored during the Tromso Meeting in 1998, when guidelines were adopted for oil spill contingency planning and for reporting oil spill incidents. At the same time, recommended procedures for fuel oil handling at Antarctic stations were approved.

During the Tromso Meeting, an Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting website was established with a view to making information on Antarctica and on the Antarctic Treaty more accessible to the general public. This means of ensuring transparency was extended at the Lima meeting to include information on the Committee for Environmental Protection, with all documents from this meeting displayed in the four official languages of the Antarctic Treaty system.

In the past two years, considerable progress has been made with the Antarctic Protected Areas System, which ensures comprehensive protection for key habitats throughout Antarctica. Guidelines to standardize the production of management plans for Antarctic protected areas were adopted at the Tromso meeting, and further consideration was given to the establishment of protected areas in the marine environment. In an innovative procedure, technical workshops to examine issues relating to protected areas were convened in 1998 and 1999.

During the most recent Treaty Meeting, a review of the list of specially protected species in Antarctica was instigated, with the purpose of improving the effectiveness of this conservation mechanism. The year 1999 also saw the adoption of guidelines to assist in the preparation of environmental impact assessments.

The Antarctic Treaty and its Parties, and indeed the Antarctic Treaty system as a whole, have successfully met the varied challenges they have faced over the past 40 years and have demonstrated their ability to deal with changing situations. The ability of States Parties to anticipate critical issues and to take action in advance of actual problems arising has been a hallmark of the Antarctic Treaty. This has stood the Treaty in good stead. But the Treaty Parties are well aware that further challenges remain and lie ahead. They are not complacent.

In this regard, at Lima the Antarctic Treaty Parties expressed their grave concern at the scale of illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing for toothfish in the Southern Ocean. As a consequence, stocks of this important species are under threat. Significant and wholly unsustainable levels of mortality of globally important seabird species, principally albatrosses and petrels, associated with the toothfish fishery, are also occurring. Recognizing the seriousness of this problem for the wider Antarctic environment, the Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties, through means of a resolution, lent their support to the Commission for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources — established under a sister treaty, the Convention for the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR) — for the introduction of further regulatory measures at its meeting this year.

In that respect, I am pleased to announce that at its eighteenth meeting, at Hobart, Tasmania, last week, the CCAMLR Commission adopted a Catch Documentation Scheme designed to closely monitor and constrain the international trade in toothfish. This is a significant achievement. It should do much to combat the serious problem of illegal, unregulated and unreported fishing.

The general problems of illegal and unregulated fishing are not unique to CCAMLR and the areas of the Southern Ocean that fall under its responsibility. They have unfortunately become widespread. They affect many regional fisheries organizations worldwide.

Here, in this wider audience, it would be opportune to inject a plea to those third States whose vessels and nationals are known to have been engaged in the toothfish fishery in the Southern Ocean. The conservation of Antarctica's marine environment requires that flag States fully exercise their responsibilities, including the need for due recognition by the operators of their flag vessels of the rules and regulations which apply to the Southern Ocean. It is incumbent on us all to recognize the part we must play if the protection of this unique part of the global environment is to be ensured.

The Antarctic Treaty Parties remain committed to elaborating rules and procedures relating to liability for damage arising from activities taking place in the Antarctic Treaty area and covered by the Protocol. Progress towards a liability annex to the Protocol has been made, particularly at the last two Treaty Meetings. The Treaty Parties intend to maintain this momentum and to continue to work towards an effective annex or annexes on liability at future meetings.

The Parties now anticipate the early entry into force of a further Annex to the Protocol, on area protection and management. This fifth Annex provides a rigorous framework for the protection of designated areas and will enable continued adequate management of various activities in Antarctica, including science and tourism.

The issue of tourism in the Antarctic is watched closely by the Parties. The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Parties are concerned at the trend towards larger passenger vessels operating in the waters south of 60° south and encourage non-parties to the Environmental Protocol, particularly those with Antarctic tourist activities organized in their territory, to accede to the Protocol.

It was agreed at Lima to convene a meeting of experts in April 2000 to elaborate guidelines for Antarctic shipping and related activities. The primary focus of the guidelines will be to improve standards of safety and environmental protection for vessels operating in Antarctic waters. The International Maritime Organization will be invited to participate at the expert level in the development of these guidelines.

On behalf of the Antarctic Treaty Parties, I am pleased to report this continuing commitment to an effective regime for the protection of the Antarctic environment and to ensuring that the governance of Antarctica upholds the principles of international cooperation and that Antarctica is used exclusively for peaceful purposes. Antarctica remains the only demilitarized continent in the world. The Treaty is open to accession by all Members of the United Nations or any other State which may be invited, and the Parties will continue to encourage all States with an active interest in Antarctica to accede to the Treaty and its Environmental Protocol.

It is unclear what the next 40 years may bring. However, the Treaty Parties look to the Antarctic Treaty and the comprehensive system of regulations that has developed under it as the means to provide the effective governance and management of this vitally important part of our planet.

The Acting Chairman: Do any other delegations wish to speak? It appears not.

As the result of consultations among groups and delegations, a draft resolution has been formulated as the Chairman's proposal, as contained in document A/C.1/54/L.58.

I have been informed by the Secretariat that there are no speakers for the general debate at tomorrow's meeting. Thus, I should like to propose that we take action on the draft resolution this afternoon. According to our timetable, we have set aside one more meeting for this agenda item, but if there are no speakers I think it would be appropriate to proceed further at this meeting and take action on the draft resolution.

If I hear no objection, I shall take it that the Committee decides to take action on the draft resolution this afternoon. Does any delegation wish to explain its position or vote? I see none.

Draft resolution A/C.1/54/L.58 was adopted.

The Acting Chairman: Does any delegation wish to explain its position after taking action? I see none. The Committee has concluded its consideration of the question of Antarctica, under agenda item 66.

Mr. Lin Kuo-Chung (Secretary): Members of the Committee may be anxious to know when the reports of the First Committee will be taken up in plenary meeting. As a result of consultation with Documents Control and Meetings Servicing, it has been promised that all reports of the First Committee will be taken up in plenary meeting on 1 December.

The Acting Chairman: I declare the fifty-fourth session of the First Committee closed.

The meeting rose at 3.50 p.m.